



EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

April 5, 2023

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Jewru Bandeh, Director
East County Regional Services Office

Hon. Marc Elrich
Montgomery County Executive
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear County Executive Elrich,

On behalf of the East County Citizens Advisory Board, I am writing to request an addition to the 2024 Operating Budget. A recent presentation at an ECCAB meeting on the Opioid Crisis alerted us to the immediacy of the crisis, especially the deadly effects of fentanyl in Montgomery County. This presentation by Mr. Ben Stevenson II, the program manager at the Department of Health and Human Services, provided important insight into the crisis. This is an emergency of great importance to our citizens that needs an immediate increase in its budget if it is to be successful.

We request the following budget additions:

1. Increase office resources and staffing to support the program's growing mission. We request that new staff be Montgomery County employees committed to the effort rather than contract workers.
2. Recognizing the important connection between opioid abuse and mental health challenges, we request providing budgetary resources to address their co-occurrence so the related county programs can work more closely together.
3. Increase resources to provide expanded preventive and education programs throughout the county for students, parents, educators, and other citizens who may encounter overdose victims. This would include more education on Good Samaritan protection, how to use Narcan kits and more general education about the special dangers of fentanyl.

Because we have only recently been apprised of the limitations of the resources available to address the opioid crisis, we wish to add the above items to our list of 2024 budget requests at this time. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Peter Myo Khin, ECCAB Chair

Cc: Evan Glass, Council President
Kristin Mink, D5 Council Member
Jewru Bandeh, ECRSO Director